



# YAKIMA VALLEY

## CONFERENCE OF GOVERNMENT

CONVENER, CATALYST AND RESOURCE

## STRATEGIC PLAN

Adopted January 2017

The Yakima Valley is made up of diverse cities, each with unique qualities. Together, we comprise one community – the Yakima Valley. Founded upon the principles of regional collaboration, cooperation, and consensus building, **the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG) serves as a convener, catalyst, and resource.** Together, public and private partners work together to develop and implement innovative strategies that enhance the Region's quality of life and economic vitality.

### Vision:

Provide and assist collaboration for communities to optimize resources.

### Mission:

Provide member jurisdictions a regional network for professional community planning, transportation, grant writing, GIS and facilitate coordinated efforts on matters of mutual concern

### Goals:

**1. ENHANCED CUSTOMER RELATIONS** - YVCOG knows that the membership today wants improved customer experience, which can be achieved through better communication between the membership and the YVCOG.

### Actions:

- General Membership & Beyond: Provide better communication through the use of: Newsletters, website, grant listserv, trainings and forums for both elected officials and municipal staff, marketing services to members, and having a regular presence at city council meetings.
- Executive Committee & Advisory Boards: Provide committee with succinct information that promotes improved decision-making. Develop dashboards & desk reference for Homeless Program, other programs. Create a "Welcome to YVCOG" packet or notebook for new board members and staff. Build unified guidelines or bylaws for advisory committees (Transportation Technical Advisory Committee; Homeless Planning and Policy Council)
- Partnerships: Improve & expand relationships with ports, YCDA, and related organizations.

**2. IMPROVED PROGRAM DELIVERY** – Improved program delivery means doing what we do well, better. It almost means anticipating the needs of our member agencies by asking them and staying abreast of industry trends. We leverage the considerable resources of the Yakima County Region, public and private funding to nurture and enhance our Region as well as our communities.



## Goals, Continued:

### Actions:

- Sustain Existing Programs: Cross-train staff in other programs; Performance Measures: What can/should be measured, and how to report it.
- Develop/Integrate New Programs: Transit feasibility study; What new services do members need (e.g., small works roster, payroll, HR policies)? Feasibility of subscription-based grant writing for members.
- Improve YVCOG's Information Technology: Evaluate cost-effectiveness of enhancements such as permanent and/or portable phone bridges; Skype; video conferencing.

**3. PROVIDE STAFF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES** – Each employee is an asset to the organization. Induction and initial training are only the foundation of an ongoing process. YVCOG will analyze our needs on a regular basis to identify gaps and then develop appropriate training programs. Ongoing training for employees benefits both the organization and the individual.

### Actions:

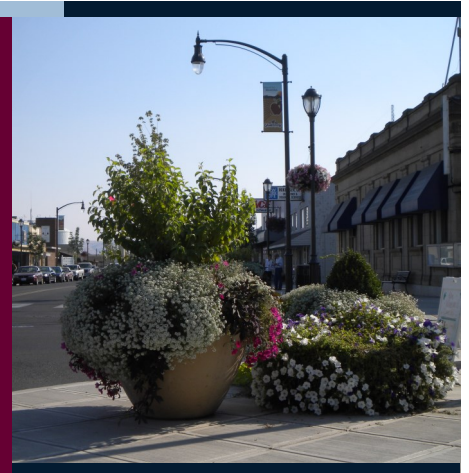
- Enhanced Training: Develop position-specific training (e.g., a matrix); provide opportunities for gaining supervisory experience; attend and/or present at conferences & workshops; explore cross-training and peer-exchange opportunities.
- Improved Work Environment: Provide training and guidance on working with conflict & change; promote wellness activities, potlucks, and celebrations; initiate annual performance reviews; encourage staff to identify inefficient processes and procedures, and recommend streamlining ideas; create an 'exploded' organization chart that describes primary roles of each person; create policy for staff serving on boards, commissions, or task forces.
- Recruitment & Retention: Consider hiring interns; build YVCOG HR program; what services and functions does/would a fully-staffed YVCOG perform?

As we continue to face challenges, the Strategic Plan provides the 'rudder' we use to guide our path forward. The 2016-2017 Strategic Plan is a living document that will adapt as we face new challenges in the future. The Executive Director will be responsible for reviewing the Plan on an annual basis, assessing the progress of the various programs and the action items included herein, and making recommendations to the Executive Committee on updates to the plan as appropriate.

This version of the strategic plan is focused on the internal functions of YVCOG. Future strategic or comprehensive plans will be external and member-driven, working with our member agencies in order to help define future YVCOG services, for example.

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